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LD/S 70-0573

9 February 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : Report of Support Services Problem Solving Seminar #4

REFERENCE : DD/S Memo 70-0252, dtd 20 January 1970

1. The senior officers of the Office of Training found little nourishment in this report. Its findings struck us as a mixture of platitudes, vague generalities, and often questionable analysis of where our managerial problems lie. Rather than pass on a detailed critique of these findings, I shall confine myself to commenting on the recommendations.

2. Those on Barrier A:

a. Many of us do not agree that management should adhere so narrowly to the chain of command. One of the best trends in communication over the past several years has been the appearance of the top echelons of the organization before much junior personnel in forums like the Midcareer Course and others.

b. We agree that well selected jobs and supervisors are better than indiscriminate assignments and a stifling environment. Not very helpful to say so.

c. It is a romantic fallacy to suppose that tinkering with the fitness report will make people better communicators or better managers.

3. On Barrier B:

a. When every young professional in CIA is exposed to "early training," we shall certainly encourage him to become more sensitive to working with people. But adding sensitivity training at any point in a training program requires much more careful consideration than the offhand comment made in Recommendation 1.

b. Recommendation 2 sounds fine at first, but how could anyone carry it out? It would be a full-time job selecting, expurgating, and explicating "correspondence and reports" in such a way as to create the

desired impression. Meanwhile, if our methods and techniques were adequate to solve our problems, the problems would have been solved and would not repay further study. What is more likely is that we would expose our imperfections unduly.

4. On Barrier C:

a. We agree that accurate forecasts are desirable and that we should not hire people who are too highly qualified for their jobs and pay.

b. We agree that assignments should be meaningful and that responsibilities should be clearly defined.

c. We do not believe that anybody, no matter what his rank, experience, and skill, can "inform the young professional what he can realistically expect in terms of career." The one certainty is change, and largely unpredictable change at that. But with the underlying point of this recommendation, not to raise the newcomer's hopes in a manner contrary to observable experience, we of course agree.

d. Periodic survey of job attitudes, etc., would require massive enlargement of the Psychological Services Staff. If such surveys were to be undertaken, a good deal of the attention ought to go to the older hands too, especially those around GS-13 - 15 who have been in grade for many years.

5. The brief comment on Barrier D aroused much sympathetic agreement, but the recommendations do not really address the problem, which is reluctance to delegate authority. We shall not overcome that reluctance with a few vague, indefinable counsels of perfection. Instead, progress on this crucial problem will require at least three lines of action: 1) recognition from the top down that managerial authority in CIA is too highly centralized; 2) carefully devised specifics on what responsibilities to delegate and how far; and 3) scrutinizing practices and procedures with a view to clearing away the managerial underbrush, by which I mean things like the twenty-odd career services, the "midcareer program," and other impressive-sounding but ineffectual illusions.

6. On Objective B, it is useless to discuss involving the younger professional in the decision-making process until that process also involves the older, more experienced people between him and the top. The recommendations here add up to finding out what is on the younger professional's mind. If such consultation is

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followed by action, then he will have become involved to good purpose; if not, then he will have had one more false hope raised, and the reaction will be worse than if the effort had not been made. If such consultation is meant to educate the young officer on the realities of slow promotion, the overcrowding of grades just ahead of his, etc., etc., then we ought to acknowledge that motive and not pretend to "involve him in decision-making." In any case, the interest in being heard is already there and needs no stimulation; it needs careful direction and management.

7. I am sorry to have found this earnest effort of so little practical value.



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